

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Pursuant to their duty of good faith and candor as set forth in 37 CFR 1.56(a), applicants request that the references cited on attached form PTO-1449 (a copy of which is enclosed) be considered by the Examiner in connection with the search of the prior art required by 37 CFR 1.104.

Please note that enclosed is a copy of U.S. Patent No. 5,476,538 which is the English language counterpart for Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 7-24357.

Please note that the English language translation of Japanese Patent Application Publication No. 2000-167388 is also enclosed. Please also note that this English translation is a machine translation provided by the Japan Patent Office and the Japan Patent Office states that the translation may not precisely reflect the original Japanese text.

ALL REFERENCES CONSIDERED EXCEPT WHERE LINED THROUGH. /A.B./

Information Disclosure Statement
Application No.: 10/521,173
Page 2

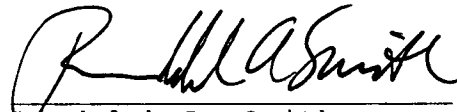
This Statement is being filed under 37 CFR 1.97(b) prior to the mailing date of a first Office Action on the merits.

It is respectfully requested that the above information be considered by the Examiner and that a copy of the enclosed Form PTO-1449 be returned indicating that such information has been considered.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached at the telephone number listed below. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address below.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: November 30, 2006


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ALL REFERENCES CONSIDERED EXCEPT WHERE LINED THROUGH. /A.B./

Complete if Known

Application Number	10/521,173
Filing Date	January 14, 2005
Applicants	Kikuo OKUYAMA et al.
Group Art Unit	2877
Examiner Name	
Attorney Docket Number	0074/048001

Sheet 1 of 1

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

[illegible]

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

[illegible]

03/31/2008

DATE CONSIDERED

*Examiner: Initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.

¹Unique citation designation number. ²Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached. ³Enter Office that issued the document, by the two-letter code (WIPO Standard ST.3). ⁴For Japanese patent documents, the indication of the year of the reign of the Emperor must precede the serial number of the patent document. ⁵Kind of document by the appropriate symbols as indicated on the document under WIPO Standard ST. 16 if possible. ⁶Applicant is to place a check mark here if English language Translation is attached.

ALL REFERENCES CONSIDERED EXCEPT WHERE LINED THROUGH. /A.B./